



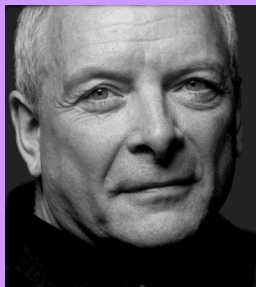
J. Reilly Lewis, Music Director

Prelude

Glorious Music in a Glorious Setting®

Cathedral Choral Society
J. Reilly Lewis - Music Director

Winter 2012



Christopher Hogwood

For those of us who have made a career in what is called classical music, Mozart is a prime calling card. People who may not like the ambient idea of concert halls or classical radio announcers will still buy Mozart's music for their babies, attend a production of Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* (or see the estimable film), read about the so-called Mozart effect. There is a sewage treatment plant in Germany's Brandenburg state that uses Mozart to help break down waste. Yes, for real.

I remember that soon after the huge buzz about the play *Amadeus* had swept the world I had a chance to talk to [Christopher Hogwood](#). I had interviewed him in many places, including Paris where he was conducting a Mozart opera. He was furious about the whole thing: the historical inaccuracies, the way the composer was made to look weak and trivial, even the lush [Sir Neville Marriner](#) use of the music rather than the more spare sound that would have been heard in Mozart's own day.

My argument was (and is) that this has been so good for Mozart himself, that thousands had been exposed to his music in ways that never would have happened otherwise. We in the game of trying to popularize classical music are grateful for a film by a Stanley Kubrick or any other director who values music of the past in their scoring, a commercial that uses opera, a television show where snatches of classics are heard. Still, I took his point.

In the wonderful series by Kenneth Clark, [Civilisation](#), he reflects how in the early twentieth century so many thought of Mozart as a pretty Rococo composer, "a notion supported by these horrible little plaster busts that make him look a perfect 18th century dummy. I bought one of these busts when I was at school. But when I first heard the [G Minor Quartet](#), I realized it could not possibly have been written by the smooth, white character on my mantelpiece, so I threw the bust into my wastepaper basket."

Lord Clark went on in his marvelous way to invoke the genius of Mozart as, yes, a product of his age, but also a thing apart. We can read the letters, we can understand the well-documented facts of his life, but what can we really know that illuminates this master? This is why Peter Shaffer's play will live on; we are all [Salieri](#) as we hold in our hands a score by the young genius: "On the page it looked nothing. The beginning simple, almost comic. Just a pulse - bassoons and basset horns - like a rusty squeezebox. Then suddenly - high above it - an oboe, a single note, hanging there unwavering, till a clarinet took over and sweetened it into a phrase of such delight! This was no composition by a performing monkey! This was a music I'd never heard. Filled with such longing, such unfulfillable longing, it had me trembling. It seemed to me that I was hearing a voice of God."



Antonio Salieri



Sir Neville Marriner



Venanzio Rauzzini

It is that voice that Maestro Reilly Lewis has chosen for us to hear on this program. We can marvel at the early masterpieces: Mozart was only seventeen when he wrote the setting of [Exultate, Jubilate](#) for the castrato [Venanzio Rauzzini](#). Rauzzini had just been driven from the court of Munich for his many affairs with married women (yes, castrati were the ultimate in safe sex for the ladies) when Mozart heard him perform in Vienna and offered him a role in the opera *Lucia Silla*. That 1773 success was rewarded by Mozart with this incomparable little gem, and that may have in turn inspired Rauzzini to take up composing himself: after he moved to London the following year he wrote the first of his six operas.

I keep a complete list of the estimable chronological catalogue of Mozart's works by [Ludwig Köchel](#) next to my desk at work, always marveling at how few of those 600-plus numbers we really hear. Many of the early works are short sacred settings from the Salzburg years, and if all we had of Mozart was his first twenty or so years rather than the scant thirty-five years given to us, he would of course still have been a composer of the highest order. It is well worth hearing one of the recordings of the early sacred works (the old Vienna Boys Choir disc, or the excellent Nikolaus Harnoncourt set on *Das Alte Werk*, or the Chamber Choir of Europe recording of all the sacred works) just to revel in Mozart's early mastery of the choral form.



Ludwig Köchel

Our setting of the *Regina coeli* is the third by the composer (the others are K. 108 and K. 127). Köchel put the composition in 1777; most scholars have linked it to the 1779 end of the Salzburg era for the composer, at the time of the composition of the exquisite *Solemn Vespers*. Since there is no autograph and some of the manuscript sources are dubious, some have suggested it should be put in the doubtful category like a few others of the sacred works attributed to Mozart; but most Mozartians believe that this feels like and sounds like their beloved composer.

The first mass setting goes back to the K. 49. There are some sixteen settings (mostly short masses) before Mozart gives us his two last sacred works, the so-called "Great Mass" in *C Minor*, and that final *Requiem*. We heard the Kyrie from the *Great Mass* in the film of *Amadeus*, and it comes in most remarkably in the Sylvain Chomet animated feature *The Triplets of Belleville*. Once again, we are glad for any exposure to these sounds.



Aloysia Weber

Mozart had come under the thrall of the girls in the musical Weber family while visiting Mannheim in 1777, when he fell for the elder sister [Aloysia](#) (Constanze was then only fifteen). Mozart pursued (and was rejected by) Aloysia as the family moved first to Munich before finally settling in Vienna. It was even deemed "safe" for the composer to move in with the family after Mozart came to Vienna to live in the spring of 1781. Aloysia had married by then and was helping Mama Caecilia to add to their earnings by taking in boarders in their house, *Zum Augen Gottes* (The Eye of God).

When Caecilia got wind of the idea that Mozart was now pursuing Constanze, she asked him to leave--after nearly six months in their home! The history of that relationship is well documented, and the funny and flirty and eventually deep bond between the two is the stuff of musical and romantic legend. They had a tiff in the spring of 1782--a handsome young man was measuring Constanze's calves at a party during a game--but the wedding proceeded anyway (after a long and trying process of getting Papa Leopold Mozart's blessing).

In the Mozart way, this was only after Constanze had run from her home into Mozart's lodgings (to say this was scandalous in 1782 Vienna is understating the point), and sister Sophie had told Mozart that the police would break down his door (as Mozart plaintively wrote on August 4th: "Can the police here enter anyone's house in this way? Perhaps it is only a ruse of Madame Weber to get her daughter back. If not, I know no better remedy than to marry Constanze....").

When Constanze fell ill in the early winter of 1782, Mozart vowed to write a work that would give thanks if she recovered, and wrote Leopold on January 14th of 1783 that he would fulfill the promise made "in the depth of my heart" to create a work of thanksgiving.

[Gottfried van Swieten](#) had had Mozart look over his own manuscripts of Bach and Handel, and those towering predecessors are reflected in this piece. The prickly [Archbishop Colloredo](#) who governed Salzburg often had his differences with the freewheeling Mozart, but the composer adapted a few pieces he had written earlier in Salzburg for this first performance of the mass. He even employed the members of the Archbishop's personal musicians when the mass was premiered in St. Peter's Abbey there in October of 1783. Constanze sang the soprano part.

And again, in the Mozart way, the work was not then or was it ever finished. The Credo is not complete and there is no Agnus Dei. The Sanctus is in fragments. Different editors have borrowed this and that from other works to make a complete mass. But, as is also always the case with Mozart, let us be grateful for what we do have.

Leave it to Maestro Lewis to give us another of those rarely heard Köchel numbers: the [K. 608 Fantasia](#) was originally written for two mechanical organs, when mechanical instruments were all the rage (if you can get to the museum for these in the Dutch city of Utrecht, it is a revelation and a joy). It is the kind of trifle tossed off by the composer almost as a challenge to those who would try and capture the subtleties of his writing on a man-made machine. Yes, a trifle, but a trifle by the mature Mozart, so as we go from the slow march to the little fugue to the main theme and return to the opening chords, we are never in doubt as to whose hands we are in.

One thinks of the little nine-year-old boy playing on the great organs in the Lowlands during the Grand Tour with his father and sister. They still tell the tale in Antwerp of the boy asking the organ master to play a tune, whereupon he climbed the loft and filled the cathedral with the sound of Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor!*



Gottfried van Swieten



Archbishop Colloredo



Joseph Haydn



J. Reilly Lewis, Music Director

The little genius; this boy who, a few months after the *Fantasia in F*, jots down forty-six bars of a setting for *Corpus Christi*, the *Ave verum corpus*, which he sent to his and the great older mentor [Franz Joseph Haydn's](#) friend, Anton Stoll. In late spring of 1791, he is in the middle of writing *The Magic Flute*, and the *Requiem* was perhaps already on his mind. In five months and three weeks he would be gone, and again, as you hear these three minutes or so of that "voice of God," let us remind ourselves of how blessed we were and are to have received what we did.

I remember after returning for the Mozart 250th anniversary celebrations in 2006 my colleague Martin Goldsmith told me that even with all the many concerts over the many days, he just never tired of it: there is so much wealth there, so much diversity, so much healing.

In my work with music education we often have to deal with the idea of a Mozart effect. Is it really wise to try and sell this music because it will help with math scores? Much amazing scientific work is being done using music for helping people young (infant learning), disabled (autism), elderly (Alzheimer's patients). This is most worthy of support and encouragement.

And we who are here today will experience all that. That, and what is beyond; as the indispensable musical figure who inspired so many of us, Leonard Bernstein, said, "Mozart combines serenity, melancholy, and tragic intensity into one great lyric improvisation. Over it all hovers the greater spirit that is Mozart's — the spirit of compassion, of universal love, even of suffering — a spirit that knows no age, that belongs to all ages."

--Robert Aubry Davis

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